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March 30, 1982

040

The Honorable President pro Tempore of the Senate
The Honorable Speaker of the Assembly
The Honorable Members of the Senate and the
Assembly of the Legislature of California

Members of the Legislature:

The Auditor General's report evaluating the control mechanisms in the Governor's Office to ensure no ongoing political activity is possible, is hereby submitted by the Joint Legislature Audit Committee. The Auditor General conducted a thorough review of controls established to preclude political use of word processing equipment by the Governor's staff.

This report reveals that the policies and procedures adopted by the Governor are more than adequate to prohibit the Governor's staff from attempting to utilize state purchased equipment for political activities. The report includes a copy of the Governor's Chief of Staff's response.

This report concludes our investigation of the Governor's Office use of word processing equipment.

Respectfully submitted,

WALTER M. INGALLS
Chairman Joint Legislative
Audit Committee

WMI:smh



Telephone:
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Thomas W. Hayes
Auditor General

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Office of the Auditor General
660 J STREET, SUITE 300
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

March 29, 1982

Letter Report 040

Honorable Walter M. Ingalls
Chairman, and Members of the
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
925 L Street, Suite 750
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members:

In response to a request by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, we have reviewed the controls over the use of word processing equipment in the Governor's Office. This review was conducted under the authority vested in the Auditor General by Sections 10527 through 10528 of the Government Code.

We found that the Governor's Office has established a new approval process that staff must follow before correspondence may be entered into the word processing machines. In addition, the Governor's Office has developed a written policy prohibiting staff from using state time or equipment for political activities. These measures, if they are followed, should ensure adequate control over the use of the word processing equipment.

STUDY RESULTS

The correspondence unit in the Governor's Office uses word processing equipment to initiate correspondence sent and answer correspondence received by the Governor, to process reports prepared by the Governor's Office, and to keep records, including information about the Governor's appointees.

In February 1981, the Governor's Office implemented a new procedure for approving correspondence before it can be entered into a word processor. This procedure requires staff to complete a clearance form that includes separate approval by eight individuals, including the Governor, the chief of staff, the director of administration, and the legal affairs secretary.

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We reviewed a sample of 212 letters sent out since February 1981 to determine whether the staff was following this new procedure. We found that a clearance form was prepared for all of the letters sampled, although in many instances, the form was not approved by all individuals listed on the form. However, in all but a few instances, both the director of administration and the chief of staff had approved these forms.

The Governor's chief of staff stated that because some of the individuals whose approval is required are not always available, all approvals are difficult to obtain. He did state, however, that in all cases either the chief of staff or the director of administration has to approve correspondence. We found that at least one of these individuals had approved all the letters we reviewed.

Also, while we were conducting our review, the Governor's Office developed written policy, entitled "Code of Ethical Conduct," for its employees. This policy, to be implemented in March 1982, prohibits employees from using state time or equipment for political activities. The chief of staff within the Governor's Office has been given the responsibility of ensuring that the Governor's staff understands and adheres to this policy.

CONCLUSION

Our review disclosed that the Governor's Office has developed policies and procedures designed to prohibit the use of state time and state equipment for political activities. We believe that these policies and procedures, if they are followed, should be sufficient to ensure adequate control over the use of the word processing equipment in the Governor's Office.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Hayes
THOMAS W. HAYES
Auditor General

Staff: Thomas A. Britting, Audit Manager
Dennis L. Sequeira

Attachment: Response to the Auditor General's Report



State of California

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
SACRAMENTO 95814

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

916/445-5106

March 22, 1982

Mr. Thomas W. Hayes
Auditor General
Office of the Auditor General
660 J Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Tom:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on your report regarding the procedures we follow for use of our word processing machines.

The unfortunate and unprofessional manner in which the Fair Political Practices Commission released its report on our office replete with innuendos and unsupported accusations understandably raised questions about our internal controls. The public must be assured that its tax dollars are not being used for political purposes, and I am thus pleased that your report once again documents there has been no misuse of public funds whatsoever by anyone on this staff.

I would hope that your report, from the third independent agency to review and clear our office, will finally allay any remaining doubts and bring this matter to a close. Nevertheless, I again extend my offer for you to review our operations at any time, without prior notice, as a continuing assurance to the taxpayers that our office maintains the highest standards of any public office in the State.

Sincerely.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. T. Collins".

B. T. COLLINS
Governor's Executive Secretary
& Chief of Staff